

Lake Mendota Drive

**Madison's first Park and Pleasure Drive
needs an update.**

Lake Mendota Drive

Madison's first Park and Pleasure Drive was founded in 1892. The tree-lined canopy grows more enchanting every year.



MADISON PARK & PLEASURE DRIVE ASSOCIATION

During the 19th Century, Willow Creek marked the western edge of the University of Wisconsin campus and the end of University Drive. In 1892, at the suggestion of Prof. Edward T. Owen, a committee of public-spirited citizens constructed a "pleasure drive" west from this point, opening the privately-owned Lake Mendota shoreline for public enjoyment. As part of this project, the first Willow Creek bridge was built. The drive, intended for saddle horses, carriages, and bicycles, crossed University Bay Marsh, ascended Eagle Heights, and followed the shoreline to Merrill Springs (Spring Harbor). In 1894, the committee became the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association under the leadership of John M. Olin. Relying on voluntary contributions, this renowned organization established other pleasure drives as well as Tenney, Vilas, and Brittingham Parks. In 1938, its activities were assumed by the Madison Parks Commission and the Association dissolved.

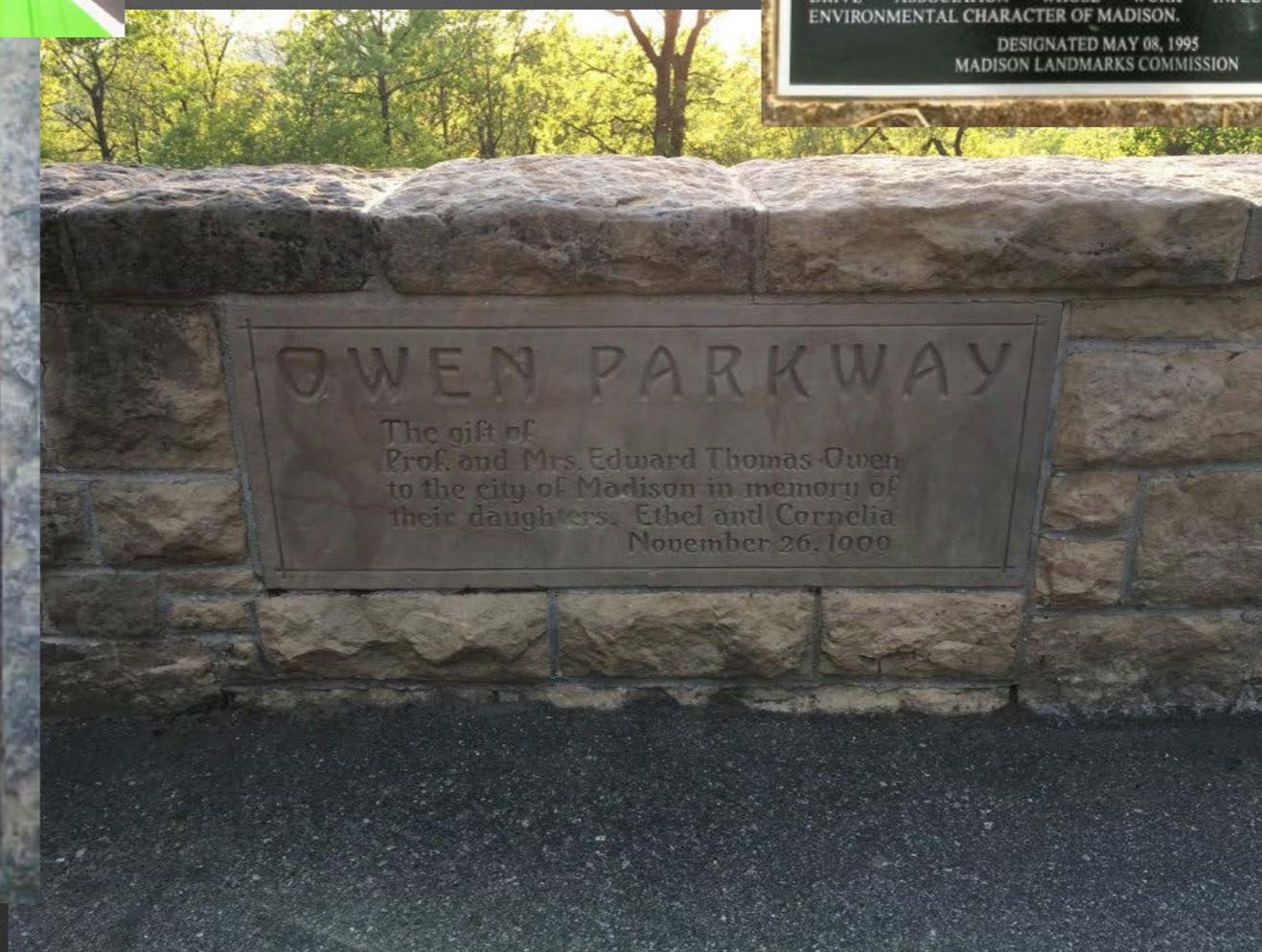
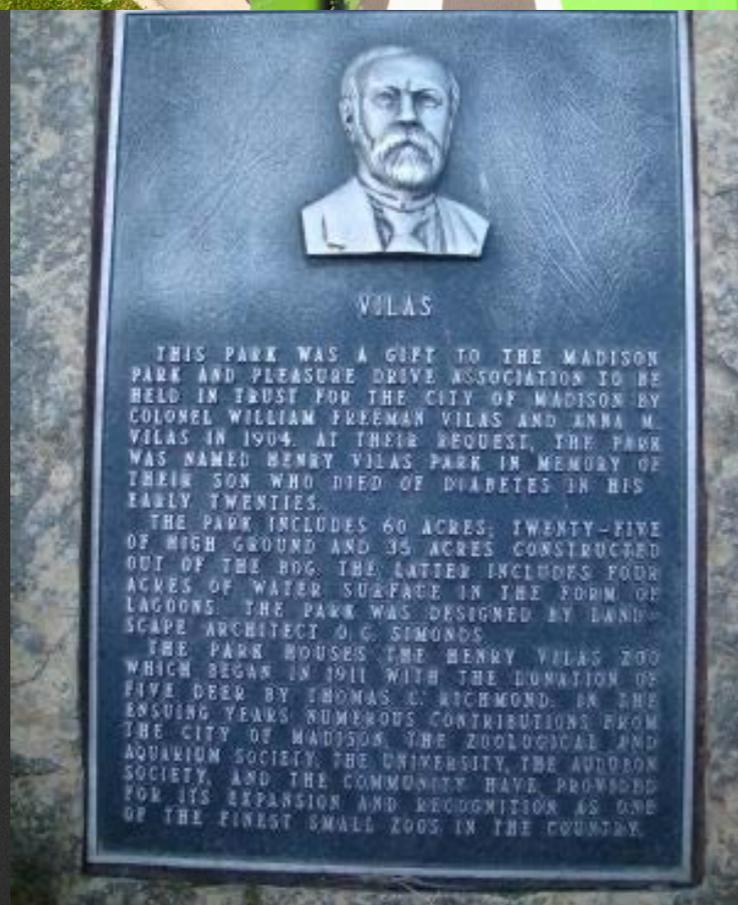
PLAQUE ERECTED IN 1995 BY HISTORIC MADISON, INC. WITH FUNDS FROM THE MADISON TRUST OF THE BRITTINGHAM FUND, INC., TO MARK THE CENTENNIAL OF INCORPORATION OF THE MADISON PARK AND PLEASURE DRIVE ASSOCIATION.

Lake Mendota Drive MPPDA Remnant, Cronon 6250

UW Lakeshore Preserve cares. "It is amazing that this stretch of road still survives. It wouldn't take much to destroy it: just a little widening to make the road 'safer' and more 'efficient,' and it would be gone forever. This little stretch of roadway is arguably even more fragile than the forests that surround it, and deserves our care as much as anything else in the Lakeshore Preserve."

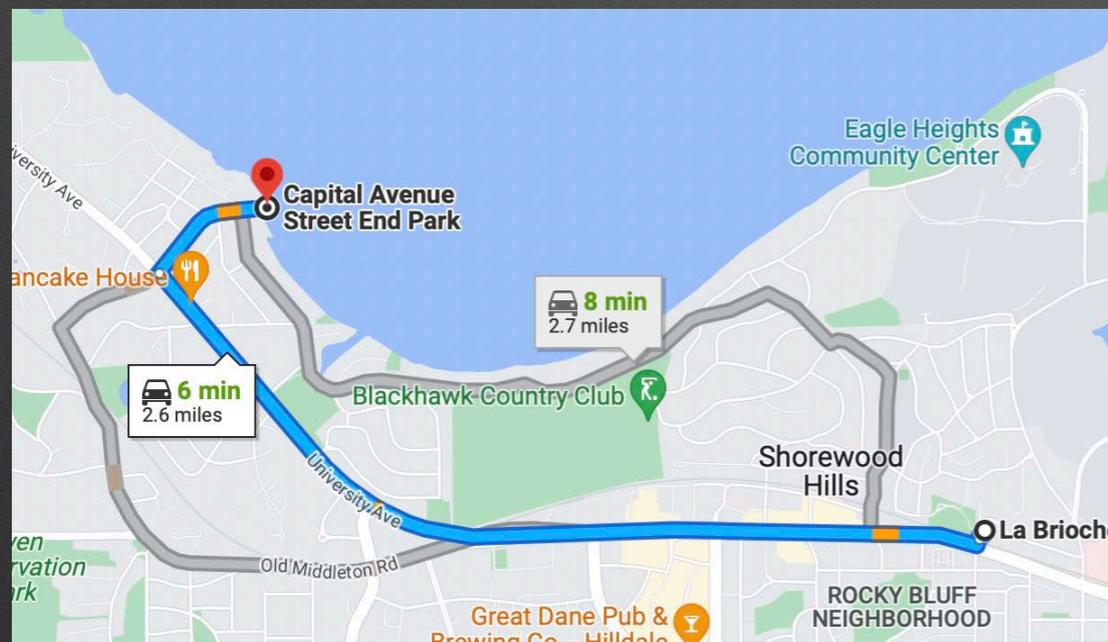
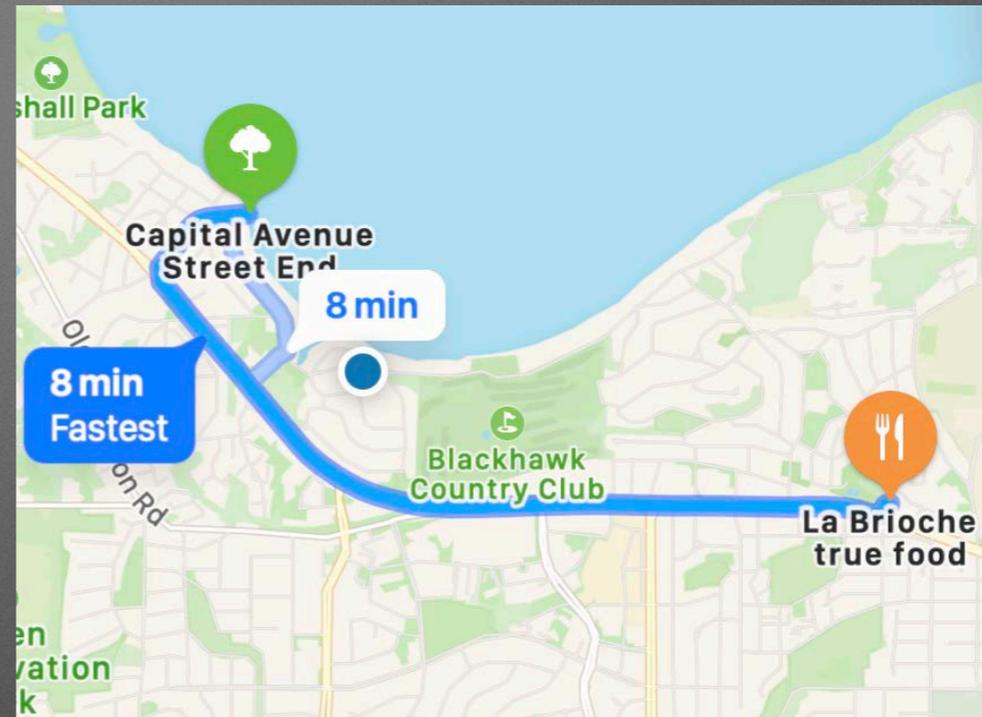
<https://lakeshorepreserve.wisc.edu/visit/places/madison-park-and-pleasure-drive-remnants/>

The City of Madison was gifted all these parks and parkways in 1938.



Lake Mendota Drive

It's a parkway, not a transit route. Apple and Google Maps direct cars to University Ave even when the starting point is on the lake.



And if you are a bike commuter, its faster to use the Bike Path just 500 yards away.



Don't let the name 'Drive' fool you. Madison parkways are mostly used for pedestrians and pleasure bikers.



Arboretum Drive



Owen Parkway



Lake Mendota Drive



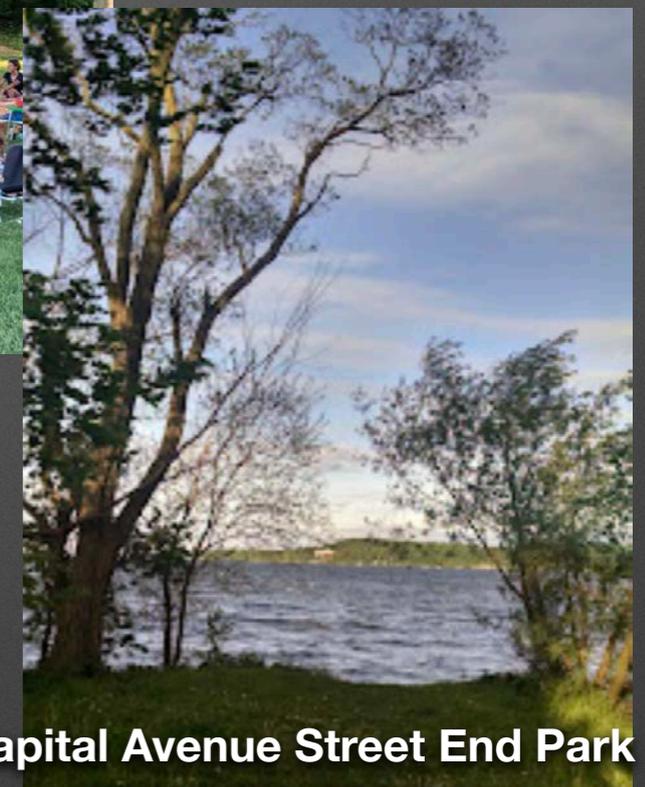
Vilas Drive

This parkway connects us to water, nature, history, culture and each other.

- Public beach
- Public boat launch
- Public lake access
- Playground
- Effigy mounds
- Sacred Springs



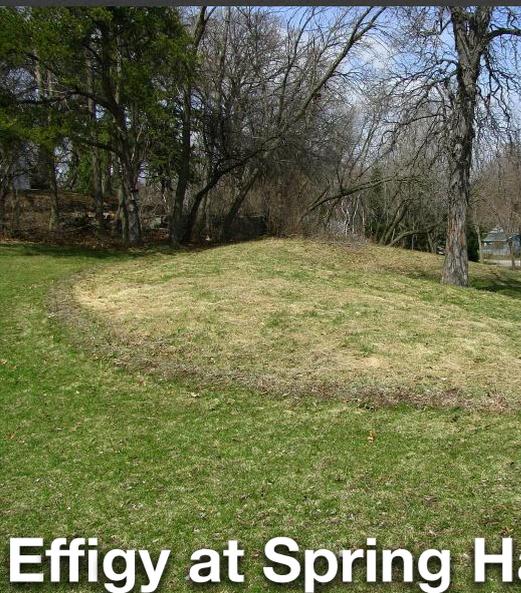
Merrill Spring Park



Capital Avenue Street End Park



Mąąą' Mąą'i



Effigy at Spring Harbor School



Spring Harbor Beach



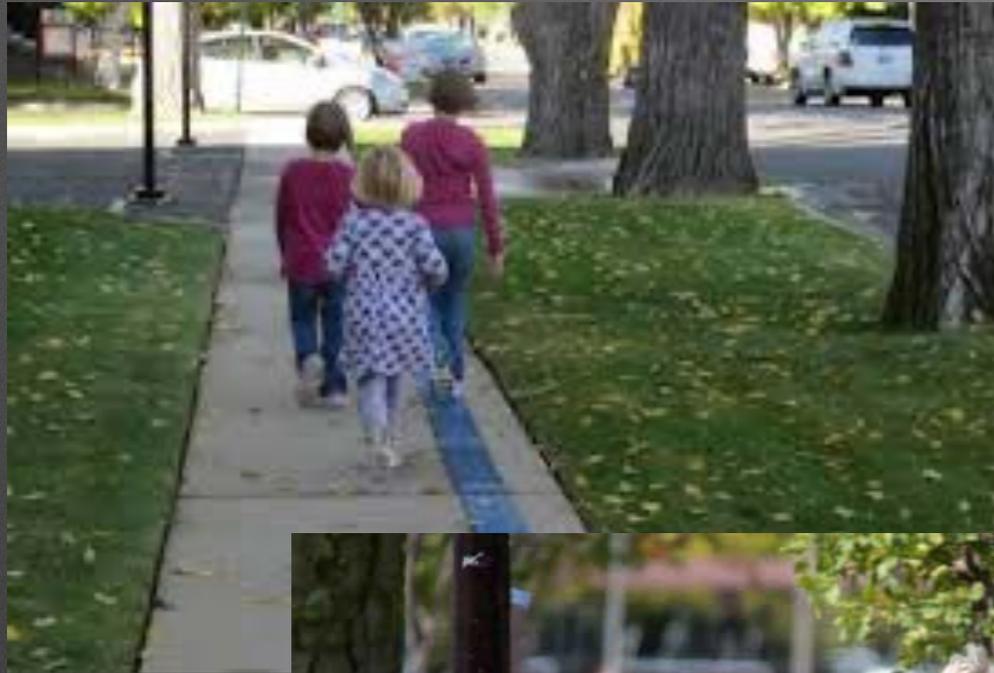
Boat Launch

What's missing?

There is no meaningful awareness of the Native Americans who were here for millennia and still value its sacred treasures today.



Would sidewalks make this parkway better....?



Not where those streets are made for walking!



Folks on LMD on 4/9/22



Shared Streets are all over the world



Mailboxes are too.



Permeable Pavement improves water management

There would be room for informational waysides, parklets and art.



Respites need only a few feet of space.



Art fits anywhere.



There would be room for sustainable water management



Rain gardens can be rocky or lush.



Drains can be art.



Gardens can meet the walkway.

Lake Mendota Drive

Madison's historic parkway has a mission.

- promote cross-cultural understanding of our human relationship to water through time
- provide stewardship of the land and water
- foster community engagement in recreational and educational activities.



Lake Mendota Drive Historic Parkway c. 2024

Be a friend to water.

- *Mąąka' Mąą'í*